

Dogs on Conservation Land Education Sub-Committee Report

Sub-committee members: Lynn Huggins and Judy Zaunbrecher

Meetings: September 13 and September 27, 2017

Purpose of sub-committee: Recommend methods to clearly communicate for people walking with dogs on Town owned conservation land the regulations and expectation for control and behavior of their dogs.

Findings:

- The current signage at trailheads and listing of regulations on the Town website is not sufficient to communicate dog regulations and expectations.
- Communication methods should include several types of media including the Town website, signs at trailheads targeted at dog owners to get their attention, pamphlets, inserts in to dog license renewals, and videos.
- Other municipalities have good examples to draw from with regards to brochures, signs, and websites.

Principles that should be used for communication vehicles:

- Accurate and informative
- Capture attention of the intended audience
- Encourage everyone to know and abide by the rules

Recommendations:

- Multiple communication methods should be used to meet this objective.
 - The roll out of these methods will be dictated by the cost to do so and the available budget.
 - Resources should not be invested in permanent signage until the rules, regulations, and expectations are finalized. Therefore, if the NRC decides to take the approach of testing the effectiveness of dog owner education and peer pressure within the dog owning community, then permanent signs should not be installed until this has been proven to be effective.
- Solicit community volunteers to support education and communication effort. Specifically, to provide input on effectiveness of message, distribution of information especially through the dog owning community, and production of videos on dog etiquette agreed to by the NRC.

- The specific communication approach is:

Signs

1. Signs at trail heads
 - a. One with complete list of rules and regulations
 - b. Second sign using icons to communicate dog etiquette
2. Signs at strategic points to indicate
 - a. When entering non-Town owned Conservation Land
 - b. When dogs may be unleashed or must be leashed
 - c. Indication of agricultural land

3. Signs on Conservation Land should be kept to a minimum to retain natural setting.
4. *Anticipated resource need:* Use temporary signage initially. Cost and roll out of permanent signs will need to be developed.

Town Website

1. Provide information regarding rules and regulations on Town-owned Conservation Land
2. Include Trail Maps
3. Include list of Dog Etiquette
4. *Anticipated resource need:* within current staffing and budget. Resources needed include Division of Natural Resource personnel and Town Information Officer.

Suggestion "Box"

1. Phone and email to send suggestions and comments
2. *Anticipated resource need:* Set up email address in DNR to track comments and DNR staff time to read and respond to comments.

Brochures—focused on dogs on conservation land

1. Examples from nearby communities, non-profit conservation organizations, and municipalities across country
 - a. Sudbury Valley Trustees
 - b. Weston, MA
 - c. East Bay Regional Parks
2. How distribute?
 - a. With dog licenses
 - b. Have at 141 Keyes Rd and Town House
 - c. On website
 - d. At kiosks
3. *Anticipated resource need:* DNR staff to design brochure. Cost to print brochures. Probably comparable to Trail Maps.

Videos Demonstrating Expected Dog Etiquette

1. Produced by volunteers, content reviewed and approved by the NRC.
2. Would communicate the expectations adopted by the NRC based on our current deliberations.
3. Distributed through:
 - a. Link on Town website
 - b. Dog community social media
 - c. CCTV play on demand
4. *Anticipated resource need:* This would be volunteer lead. Videos could be produced using CCTV. Town resources needed to link to videos from website.

November 12, 2017